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Criminological

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Age, Perception of Social Diversity and Fear of Crime

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Discussion Paper 2

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October 1983

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the influence of perceived social diversity on fear of crime among residents of urban neighborhoods. Perception of social diversity may lead to feelings of uncertainty in the environment which in turn leads to increased levels of fear. Urban planning issues raised by perceived social heterogeneity are addressed as are issues raised in the fear of crime literature. For purposes of analysis age is treated as a covariate and fear levels are related to both age groupings and to demographic and perception of diversity variables. Analysis reveals that levels of fear vary by age grouping and that the perceived social diversity variables affect the age groupings differentially.

I. Introduction

The discussion that follows examines the importance of perceived social diversity [1] as an infuence on fear of crime among residents of urban neigborhoods. The analysis is set in the context of the general finding reported by Hartnagel (1979), Lee (1982a), Antunes,et al. (1977), and others that high levels of fear of crime are not dependent on personal victimization . Fear derives instead from uncertainty in the environment and from a perception of threat to personal safety. As used in this paper, perception of social diversity refers to residents' feelings about their neighborhoods in terms of whether they believe the people around them are like them or are different. We would predict that the more people see those around them as different in terms of age, sex, income and other demographic indicators, the more fearful they will be. That is, perception of an area as socially heterogeneous will raise levels of fear.

The effects of perceived social diversity on increasing fear has not been systematically studied in the literature. Merry's(1981) observations concerning the contextual effects of social mix on fear derive from ethnographic observations of interactions within particular neighborhoods. Also, while Skogan and Maxfield (1980) identify perception of social mix as a potential problem in coping with crime, they spend no time testing these effects. It is our intention in this paper to empirically examine the relationship between

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[1] "Social diversity", "social mix", and "social heterogeneity" are used interchangeably in this paper.

perception of social heterogeneity and fear of crime.

The importance of this research is two-fold. First, there is a continuing debate in the urban planning literature concerning the benefits of social diversity and forced integration in neighborhoods. Forced integration comes about as a result of the planning practice of incorporating different styles of housing and, hence, different types of people in the same neighborhood, in order to better share scarce neighborhood resources.

Second, the fear of crime debate that is now so popular in the criminological literature can benefit from an understanding of the dynamics of fear by accounting for the effects of living environments on peoples' reactions. This literature is currently being enriched by a variety of insightful measures being proposed by criminologists (see for example the 'incivility measure' proposed by Skogan and Maxfield,1981). While these measures recognize the importance of the perception of urban decay in enhancing fear the more general effects of perception of social diversity explored in this paper may provide even greater insights into the social factors which create fear in urban neighborhoods.

In order to create a model which describes the relationship between perceived social diversity and fear of crime we have reviewed two types of literature. First we examined the literature related to social mix and the problems it creates in residential areas. Then we turned to

the research findings concerning fear of crime. The combination of these factors with the social diversity variables provide us with a testable research model.

Social Diversity

Despite the view that people react negatively to social heterogeneity, arguments favoring mix date from the 19th Century (Etherington, 1974). Early advocates of social heterogeneity justified this type of social organization on the basis of raising the standards of the lower classes; encouraging cultural cross-fertilization; increasing equality of opportunity; promoting social harmony by reducing social and racial tension; and improving physical functioning of the city and its inhabitants (Etherington, 1974).

In a more contemporary presentation of ideas avout consequences of social mix, Gans (1961) suggests that there are four major advantages advocated by supporters of heterogeneity in neighborhoods. First, he suggests mix adds variety, as well as demographic 'balance' to an area. It enriches its inhabitants' lives. Homogeneity, on the other hand, stultifies relationships. Second, social mix promotes tolerance of social and cultural differences. Homogeneity leads to increased isolation between residents. Third, social mix provides a broadening educational influence on children. Homogeneity limits children's knowledge of diverse classes, ages and races. Finally, social mix encourages

exposure to alternate ways of life. Homogeneity freezes people in present ways of life (Gans, 1961).

Gans suggests that claims for both homogeneity and heterogeneity have been exaggerated and "that neither is unqualifiably good or bad" (Gans, 1961:180). The positive effects of mix, however, are contrasted with findings that show that without social homogeneity social interaction between neighbors does not develop and tension is created. Homogeneity is desirable from the point of view of improved quality of life (Soen and Agnon, 1980). Kennedy (1978) reports that increased social mix reduces the interaction with neighbours and friends in neighborhoods. Devlin(1980) argues that for the elderly living in high-density structures, where there are groups of homogenous and "trustworthy" individuals, there may be fewer of the negative consequences normally associated with these environments. Foley (1980) reports on research that indicates that age-segregated housing leads to improved psychological well-being among the elderly.

Examining another dimension of the diversity issue, Leven and Mark (1977) argue that when Whites move out of changing neighborhoods following patterns of "white flight", their real fear for the old neighborhood or attraction for the new relates to the socio-economic differences rather than the racial differences per se. Their real concerns seem to revolve around the possibilities of declining income levels in the neighborhood with the related problems of

increased proportions of renters, blue-collar workers, and single parent families (Leven and Mark, 1977:158). Conversly, Booth and Camp (1974) suggest that when blue-collar workers moved into higher status neighborhoods, their family relationships were strained. The move seems to create family stress.

While the notion that social heterogeneity does not work well may cause twinges of social conscience, from a sociological point of view it should not be surprising. Soen and Agnon indicate that satisfaction with neighborhood is directly related to satisfaction with neighbors and that the closeness of relatives is important in predicting how satisfied individuals will be. Social planners have tried for mix often with adverse results (Soen and Agnon, 1974). Other writers on the topic indicate that while the originators of the town planning concept argued for social mix as healthy, the notion simply will not work in practice (Mann, 1958).

The heterogeneity/homogeneity debate is far from over. In a recent examination of deterrence of crime, Gary Gottfredson indicates that forced heterogeneity has positive effects. "Gottfredson...suggests that social classes be 'integrated' through...enforced congregation. To this end, he recommends taxing private schools, placing low cost, public housing in richer neighborhoods, requiring that new residential developments mix 'families of varying economic cicumstances', and relocating 'troublesome' young people in

'more affluent neighborhoods'"(quoted from Nettler, 1983:14). Nettler, in reviewing the article, rejects the position indicating that "the error of such 'theories' lies in their easy assumption that coerced congregation leads to the transfer of approved values to bad actors and not vice versa. There is, of course, no evidence of such benign transmission." Similarly, one might suggest that we have no evidence indicating the effects of social heterogeneity on fear of crime. Fear may be raised or lowered by actual or perceived social mix. The data in the following analysis can provide some insight into that issue.

Social Diversity and Fear of Crime

Social diversity has been an important factor in discussions of the viability of personal communities, as illustrated in the research reported above. Social breakdown in cities takes many forms and adjustment to breakdown may be drastic. The urban dweller may restrict his or her movements (Riger,Gordon and LeBailly,1982) or may "fortify" his/her domicile all in the name of protecting self and family from the threat of crime (Conklin,1975).

Fear of crime is often generated by a belief that one's chances of becoming a victim is high. It is the belief or perception that victimization is probable that generates the fear rather that the actual probability of victimization. For instance there is a consistent research finding that indicates that those with the lowest actual vicitmization

rates have the highest fear levels (Taylor and Coles, 1983). As suggested in the discussion above, many demographic variables have been linked to the perception of fear of crime. However, perception of social diversity and its possible link to fear of crime has not been a subject of much research. Social diversity may create feelings of uncertainty for individuals in particular environments. When people around them are different in demographic terms or when housing types are different than their own, they may feel uncomfortable with that variability. The uncertainty in the environment may raise levels of perceived threat which in turn raises levels of fear. It has been shown that people do perceive communities or neighborhoods in terms of socioeconomic status, age and racial composition (as well as a number of other factors (Logan and Collver, 1983). It is our intention to investigate the relationship between those perceptions and fear of crime.

Skogan and Maxfield (1981:74) suggest that fear relationships are linear and additive. That is, fear 'accumulates', among successively more vulnerable groups. Research has shown that the elderly are the most fearful of all age groups; that as one ages, fear of crime increases (Clemente and Kleiman, 1976). The most consistent finding in all of the literature is that women are by far the most fearful group in society, and older women are the most fearful within that group (Lebowitz, 1975; Markson and Hess, 1980; Braungart, Braungart, and Hoyt, 1980; and Kennedy and

Silverman, 1983).

While Skogan & Maxfield agree that sex and age produce consistent findings in the research literature they also note reasonably stable findings in the case of race and income. Blacks are more fearful than Whites and low income people are more fearful than the relatively well to do (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981:74). Baumer (1978:260) points out that other demographic variables less consistently related to fear are race, income, and education. The effects of the last three mentioned variables appear to depend upon their distribution within neighborhoods. For example, Yaden et al, (1973) found White residents of a racially diverse high crime area to be most fearful. And Yin (1983) finds an inverse relationship between measures of well-being, including neighborhood satisfaction, and fear among the elderly.

The questions to be addressed in the following analysis relate to the importance of perceived social diversity in affecting the levels of fear of crime for particular demographic groups living in an urban environment. Social diversity will be treated in two ways. First, we examine the perception of mix according to respondents' views of people being different from themselves in terms of major demographic characteristics. Also, we assess their perceptions about the mix of housing types and densities in their neighborhood. Second, we will examine the respondents' perceptions about the desirability of social diversity.

Those people who do not favor mix should be more likely to react negatively to the presence of people who are different from themselves in their neighborhood. The analysis deals with these relationships empirically using cross-sectional data from a probability survey of residents of a mid-size Western Canadian city.

The Study

The data reported here were collected in a study called "Citizens' Concerns in Edmonton", funded by the City of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and conducted by the Population Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta in the Fall of 1978. The city had a population of 491,359 in the Spring of 1979.

In the survey, a random sample was selected from a computerized list of all city addresses enumerated in the most recent (1978) civic census. In all, 1,973 households were selected. A 76% response rate yielded a final sample size of 1,439 respondent households. In family households chosen, either the husband or wife was eligible for interviewing. In non-family households (i.e. any person or group of persons occupying a dwelling who did not constitute a family) any member over 18 years of age was eligible. The final sample included 43% males and 57% females. This sample provides us with a detailed cross-section of the population of the city including a variety of locations and living environments for comparison.

Measurement and Method

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable , fear of crime, is measured through a question asking respondents: "How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood at night?" The percentage distribution of responses to the question is[2]: (1)very safe (19.6%), (2)safe (34.4%), (3)neutral (unlabelled) response (17.2%), (4)unsafe (19.2%), and (5) very unsafe (9.6%).[3] This measure has been widely used in previous research (see Yin, 1980 and Lee, 1982b for a review). The validity of this measure has been tested in research reported by Skogan and Maxfield (1981:56-58). They report that it measures concern about personal safety as an issue separate from items related to social trust, anxiety about change, and racial intolerance. [4] Personal safety can then be studied in the context of perceived changing social and physical aspects of the neighborhood without the concern that diversity equates to or has multicollinearity with fear.

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[2]excluding 17 missing cases

[3] There were other questions asked on the survey dealing with safety during the day and fear from burglary. Of these measures, the night safety question produced the most variation in response, thereby justifying intensive analysis of this one measure.

[4]We did not add a race variable as there are few Blacks in in the city under study. Also, the number of respondents of Native Indian origin constituted only 1% of the population of the city at the time of the survey. The race factor has not proved to have a consistent pattern of relationship with fear, as pointed out above, and should not cause a problem through its absence. In fact, because we are able to remove the effects of race from the analysis, the importance of other social variables in raising fear in the urban environment may be clarified.

Independent Variables

The independent variables used to predict variations in fear of crime include demographic characteristics of individuals. Gender of respondent is important as previous research reports higher levels of fear in females than in males (Lebowitz, 1975; Markson and Hess, 1980). Clemente and Kleiman (1976) report that socio-economic status is inversely related to fear, with lower income groups reporting higher levels of fear. Income is measured here as total household income.

Malinchuk (1980) reports that the greater the education, the less the fear of crime. Education is measured here as a count of the number of years of schooling attained. This measure allows us to include the education of people with incomplete degrees, special diplomas, post-degree training, and so on. Kennedy and Silverman (1983) report that both marital status and number of people in the household are significant variables in explaining fear of crime among the elderly. We have included a measure of marital status (married=1, not married=0). Also, social isolation is measured in terms of the number of adults in the household.

Other independent variables relate to the physical environment in which people live. As we are interested in diversity of physical characteristics of the residential environment, as well as social characteristics we include

these measures for comparison purposes. Location is operationalized in terms of urban versus suburban. Urban is defined as the area within a two mile radius of the city centre (urban=1, suburban=0). Hartnagel (1979) includes a measure of location operationalized in this fashion in his analysis of community affect and fear of crime. The differences in inner city areas from suburban areas in housing types and density should provide an important contrast for our analysis. We also include tenure status (i.e., own=1, rent=2) and the type of dwelling (single=1, multiple=2). Tenure status has been used by Skogan and Maxfield (1981:101) as a salient measure of residential integration and has effects on attitudes towards crime. Housing type has been identified by Newman(1975) and others as an important factor in the reduction of crime.

The last set of independent variables include our measures of the perception of social and physical diversity and the desirability of this mix. Respondents were asked their perception of the physical and social contrasts in neighborhoods based on a variety of criteria. Specifically, the perception questions asked whether respondents believed that people in their neighborhood were the same as them or different in terms of age, occupation, income, and education (same=1, different=2). They were also asked whether or not they thought that the housing type and housing density of the neighborhood was similar throughout or different (similar=1, different=2). Further, respondents were asked

whether they favored or did not favor neighborhoods containing a mixture of different housing types (e.g. single and multiple), different housing densities (e.g smaller and larger lot sizes. high and low number of dwellings per acre), people of different ages, different incomes,and different occupations. All of these questions had were coded favor=1, don't favor=2.

Age as a Covariate

Much of the recent research on fear of crime has focussed attention on the elderly as the group most likely to experience fear (e.g., Lee,1982a; Kennedy and Silverman, 1983; Clarke and Lewis, 1982). That research has cited special problems in this age group which warrant individual study. Skogan and Maxfield(1981:76) report, as well, that there is a marked difference between respondents above 50 from those below 50 in their fear. Based on these findings, an argument can be made that in doing our analysis we should be sensitive to the effects of social diversity on fear for separate age groups. If the elderly and the over 50s have special problems that result in fear then perhaps other age groups do as well.

Medley (1980) provides a useful starting point for such distinctions. Medley divides the adult population into four age groups: 18-34; 35-44;45-64; and over 65. The group from 18-44 represent the stage of early adulthood where young

people are involved in **affirmation**. They are most likely to be concerned with income and economic demands above all else. In the age group from 35-44, or early middle age, comes the time for **attainment**. Family size is greatest and housing issues dominate. The age group from 45-64, late middle age, emphasizes **accommodation**. Chances of improving social and economic statuses are negligible. Finally, late adulthood, (over 65), represents a time of **affranchisement or accession**. Individuals are confronted by a series of changes and losses. Residential change is common (Medley, 1980:201-205).

These terms of affirmation, attainment, accommodation, and accession describe the adjustments that typify people's lives. These adjustments may be seen as important factors in allowing people to come to grips with their social and physical environments, making adaptations to aspects of social or physical diversity more or less difficult to handle. This may be especially true when considered in light of the importance of perceived social and physical diversity in affecting one's feeling of safety in a neighbourhood.

Table 1, indicates significant differences between these four age groups in terms of their feelings about personal safety. In examining the means for each group we see an increase in fear (with the exception of the transition from the first to the second age group). The t-tests between groups indicate significant differences between all groups (except the first and second) in levels

Table 1: Oneway Analysis of Variance of Night Safety by Age Groups with Between Group Comparison

ONEWAY

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	f	p
Main Effects					
Between Groups	53.06	3	17.69	11.44	.0001
Within Groups	2147.96	1389	1.55		
Total	2201.01	1392			

BETWEEN GROUP COMPARISON

	Count	Mean	S.D.
Group 1 (18-34)	687	2.56	1.26
Group 2 (35-44)	218	2.44	1.16
Group 3 (45-64)	357	2.74	1.25
Group 4 (65+)	131	3.17	1.29
Total	1393	2.65	1.26

POOLED VARIANCE ESTIMATE (t value)

Group	2	3	4
Group 1	1.24	-2.21*	-5.12*
Group 2		-2.80*	-5.29*
Group 3			-3.37*

*p < .05

of fear. These findings support the view that age groups are different in their responses to crime and should be studied separately.

Using Medley's framework and the findings from Table 1 we can formulate hypotheses about the relationships between age groups, social and physical diversity and fear of crime. Applying Medley's scheme, we would expect that in times of affirmation (18-34) perceived diversity of economic background should produce fear. These individuals are concerned with income and economic demands. Diversity of economic backround may be disconcerting. It may raise levels of perceived uncertainty in the environment which will in turn raise levels of fear. For times of attainment (35-44), the types of dwelling should be more important in affecting adjustment to neighborhoods than the people living in an area. Here people are attempting to establish stability with the trappings of adequate housing. Diversity of housing undermines the stability notion and increases fear. With accommodation (45-64), there should be more emphasis on maintaining the status quo, with people wanting to protect themselves from the transient nature of changing neighborhoods. Diversity of almost any type is a threat to the stability sought by the later adult group. In later stages, e.g. accession (65+), there should be a shift from concern about economic status to one that focuses on concern about being surrounded with people who are much younger, and therefore much more threatening. We will investigate the

importance of these stages of development in providing a context in which we can study the effects of social and physical diversity with social characteristics of people on their fear of crime.

The Medley scheme appears to be somewhat simplistic. The question of whether or not people of similar age groups will all share the same attitude towards diversity appears, at first glance, to ignore the differences that exist across income, gender, and so on. Yet, if we find that perception of diversity is important for these age groups, controlling for demographic differences, we have taken a major step in explaining the perceptual bases for the development of fear. The Medley scheme, in that circumstance, will then provide us with an explanation for the selective reaction of age groups to similar environmental stimuli.

Findings

The means and standard deviations by age group for all of the variables included in our analysis are presented in table 2. The patterns that we would expect appear with income lower for the elderly and higher for the middle age groups. The elderly live in smaller households, as well. Differences appear in the perceived social diversity variables in responses to similarities by age. Also, there is a divergence in response across age groups in terms of the desirability of living with people of different incomes in the neighborhood. There are, at the same time,

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations by Age Group

	18-34			35-44			45-64			65+		
	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D.
Gender	690	1.58	0.50	220	1.62	0.49	364	1.56	0.50	136	1.50	0.50
Education	688	13.38	2.68	218	13.33	3.68	358	11.64	3.36	126	9.36	3.89
Income*	690	3.01	5.60	220	3.37	5.77	364	3.09	5.69	136	1.92	4.08
Number in Household	689	1.82	0.38	220	1.78	0.41	364	1.80	0.40	136	1.54	0.50
Marital Status	688	1.49	0.50	220	1.27	0.45	363	1.28	0.45	136	1.59	0.49
House Type	686	1.54	0.50	213	1.29	0.45	359	1.21	0.41	135	1.35	0.48
Tenure	683	1.64	0.48	220	1.33	0.47	362	1.24	0.43	135	1.37	0.49
Location	690	1.64	0.48	220	1.76	0.43	364	1.69	0.46	136	1.62	0.24
Perceive Similar Housing	675	1.34	0.48	216	1.36	0.48	361	1.30	0.46	125	1.38	0.49
Perceive Similar Density	672	1.27	0.45	216	1.24	0.43	356	1.21	0.41	121	1.28	0.45
Perceive Same Occupation	570	1.77	0.42	187	1.73	0.44	308	1.72	0.45	98	1.75	0.44
Perceive Same Age	655	1.68	0.47	204	1.52	0.50	348	1.63	0.48	126	1.76	0.43
Favor Diff. House Types	664	1.47	0.50	209	1.56	0.50	352	1.66	0.48	123	1.60	0.49
Favor Diff. Densities	655	1.44	0.50	203	1.46	0.50	345	1.56	0.50	116	1.49	0.50
Favor Different Incomes	646	1.25	0.43	203	1.23	0.42	336	1.20	0.40	113	1.14	0.35
Favor Different Occupations	667	1.06	0.23	212	1.04	0.20	353	1.05	0.21	121	1.04	0.20
Favor Different Ages	668	1.06	0.24	212	1.05	0.21	353	1.06	0.24	124	1.07	0.26

*Income is measured through the calculation of the ratio of rent/mortgage payments as a proportion of total household income.

surprisingly small differences in the means across age groups in terms of the desirability of mixing according to age.[5]

Looking next at the zero-order correlation coefficients for the total sample (see Table 3) the strong relationship between gender and night safety (r=.40) reinforces the findings of previous studies that women fear crime more than do men. Weaker patterns appear between increases in age and fear (r=.12), living downtown and increased fear (r=-.11), and lower education and higher fear (r=-.15). The direction of these findings is consistent with reports of earlier research. Somewhat surprising is the low correlation between income and fear (r=-.02) and number of adults and fear (r=-.07) .

For the measures of perceived diversity and preferences for mix, we find uniformly low correlations with fear of crime. This finding should not be too surprising in light of the previous finding that neighborhood change factors and trust of others are unrelated to fear (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981). This finding further justifies controlling for the covariate effects of each age group separately. The analysis is therefore performed on the basis of the hypothesis that suggests that each age group responds to social and environmental change in a different way and that the reponse in turn effects levels of fear.

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[5]The responses to the questions on similarity on income and education elicited such small responses that they have been left out of the analysis.

Table 3: Zero-Order Correlation, Means and Standard Deviations for Total Sample

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	$\bar{X}$	S.D.
(1) Age	-																		1.96	1.06
(2) Gender	-0.04																		1.57	0.49
(3) Education	-0.21	-0.07																	12.70	4.69
(4) Income	-0.03	0.03	0.05																2.94	5.49
(5) No. in Household	-0.13	-0.05	-0.01	0.11															1.79	0.42
(6) Marital Status	-0.07	0.02	-0.04	-0.10	-0.61														1.41	0.49
(7) House Type	-0.25	0.03	0.08	-0.12	-0.[illegible]	0.35													1.40	0.49
(8) Tenure	-0.31	-0.01	0.03	-0.13	-0.30	0.44	0.68												1.46	0.50
(9) Location	0.01	0.08	0.03	0.13	0.21	-0.26	-0.23	-0.34											1.67	0.47
(10) Perceive Similar Housing	-0.01	-0.08	0.01	-0.03	-0.07	0.05	0.12	0.09	-0.13										1.34	0.47
(11) Perceive Similar Density	-0.0[illegible]	-0.08	0.02	-0.01	-0.04	0.05	0.17	0.13	-0.12	0.55									1.25	0.43
(12) Perceive Same Occupation	-0.04	-0.08	0.01	-0.07	-0.08	0.06	0.08	0.06	-0.06	0.09	0.07								1.75	0.43
(13) Perceive Same Age	0.00	-0.05	-0.02	-0.05	-0.13	0.17	0.08	0.17	-0.17	0.15	0.12	0.24							1.65	0.48
(14) Favor Diff. House Types	0.15	-0.04	-0.00	0.04	0.13	-0.17	-0.30	-0.31	0.09	-0.07	-0.10	-0.05	-0.02						1.54	0.50
(15) Favor Different Densities	0.09	0.00	0.03	0.06	0.08	-0.12	-0.19	-0.21	0.09	-0.03	-0.06	-0.04	-0.04	0.46					1.48	0.50
(16) Favor Different Incomes	-0.07	-0.00	0.04	0.00	0.01	0.02	-0.02	0.02	-0.01	0.01	0.03	-0.10	-0.06	0.14	0.2[illegible]				1.22	0.41
(17) Favor Different Occupations	-0.02	-0.02	-0.03	-0.01	0.02	-0.03	0.00	0.03	-0.06	0.02	0.03	-0.08	-0.00	0.07	0.09	0.32			1.05	0.22
(18) Favor Different Ages	0.01	-0.04	0.04	-0.01	0.03	-0.03	-0.03	-0.03	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.00	-0.04	0.08	0.08	0.22	0.43		1.06	0.24
(19) Night Safety	0.12	0.40	-0.15	-0.02	-0.07	0.03	0.05	0.04	-0.11	-0.03	-0.04	0.01	0.01	0.02	-0.01	-0.00	0.01	-0.02	2.65	1.26

When we examine the reduced form step-wise regression analysis* for each age group (Table 4) we discover some interesting features which can be interpreted using the age group characteristics discussed by Medley.

First, in early adulthood (18-34), the time of "affirmation", we find that the strongest predictor of fear is gender (β=.48), as it is with all other age groups. Location is the second strongest predictor of fear in this age group, with those living in the inner city areas expressing higher levels of fear than those in suburbs (β=-.13). Next in importance is the respondent's education. Those with lower education fear crime more than others in the group (β=-.11). Also, renters are more fearful than owners (β=.07). The fifth predictor of fear is the perception of occupational similarity with other people living in the neighborhood. When there is a perception that people are different from oneself in occupational terms, fear will be higher (β=.06). Sensitivity on this issue is noteworthy given the concern about income and economic demands attributed to the group by Medley. However, it is evident that this measure of diversity is a weaker predictor of fear than some of the other independent variables.

In early middle age (35-44), the time of attainment, gender, education and location are followed by the perceived diversity of housing types in explaining fear of crime

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*Only variables that were significant were included in the final equations in order to reduce the number of missing cases in the analysis.

Table 4: Reduced Form Step-Wise Regressions by Age Group on Night Safety *

18-34	B	Beta
Gender	1.24	0.48
Location	-0.34	-0.13
Education	- .05	-0.11
Own or Rent	0.18	0.07
Perceive Same Occupation	0.17	0.06
	r^2=.28	N=560

35-44	B	Beta
Gender	0.90	0.37
Education	-0.06	-0.20
Location	-0.41	-0.15
Perceive Similar Housing	-0.27	-0.11
	r^2=.23	N=212

45-64	B	Beta
Gender	0.98	0.39
Perceive Same Occupation	0.34	0.12
Location	- .32	-0.12
	r^2=.17	N=302

65+	B	Beta
Gender	0.73	0.27
Favor Different Income	0.58	0.14
Location	-0.51	-0.19
Favor Different Housing	0.50	0.19
	r^2=.19	N=106

*Beta weights displayed in these tables are all significant at 0.05 level.

(*B*=-.11). For the older middle age group (45-64) occupational similaritities (*B*=.12) are more important, entering the equation right after gender. For this group it is a time of accommodation, where the tolerance for differences in social factors in the environment are at their lowest levels.

The late adult group, aged 65 and over, relates more to attitudes towards the desirability of diversity rather than to mix itself. After gender, the most important variable in predicting fear is one's preference for differences in income (*B*=.14). Also, after location, attitudes towards differences in housing types raise fear the most (*B*=.19).

Discussion and Summary

It seems, (as Medley suggested and we hypothesized) that each age group has a set of life priorities that may be used to predict different levels of fear under varying environmental conditions. There are reasonably clear distinctions across age groups in terms of patterns of fear as they relate to social diversity. These distinctions appear when controlling for salient background characteristics of respondents.

For the youngest age group the diversity variable that contributes to fear is perception of occupational mix. Those in the group are dealing with a time of life when they are simply more concerned about income and other economic demands than anything else. However, the effect of

perception of occupational mix (the diversity variable)is weaker than that of education, location and owning/renting in raising concern about personal safety.

Again, as hypothesized, for the group in early middle age (35-44) perceived similarities in housing type is the most important social diversity variable in predicting fear of crime. The importance of this variable can be explained by Medley's definition of early middle age as a time of attainment, where concerns about housing are most important. This appears to be happening among a group living downtown who see dwellings around them as being threatening. The creation of large multiple family clusters, then, may raise fears among residents living in these areas. People living in suburbs, interestingly enough are not as threatened by physical diversity as people in the inner city are by physical homogeneity.

In the case of the late middle age group (45-64), location and perceptions of similarity in occupations are the most important variables (after gender) in predicting fear of crime. The effect here is similar to but stronger than that observed for the younger (18-34) age group. We are probably looking here at people living in older, inner city areas confronting the invasion of multiple dwellings into single-family areas. The importance of the perception of diversity variables over the variables relating directly to income or education further underlines the emphasis that Skogan and Maxfield (1981) and others have given these

measures in their discusions of the environmental predictors of fear.

The late adult group (over 65) are the most interesting group in that this is the only instance in which the preference for social homogeneity appears as an important predictor of fear. We had predicted that the effect on the elderly would derive from age diversity. Instead, our measure of attitudes towards differing incomes in the area is more important than any other variable (other than gender) in predicting fear for this group. Attitudes towards differences in housing types are also important. The elderly acknowledge changes taking place around them as inevitable but still ominous and undesirable. These findings are consistent with Medley's characterization of this group as responding to their affranchisment. Again, however, this is based on income differences rather than on differences in age. The generalizing effects of the desirability of diversity, rather than the specific effects of perceived mix may explain why the elderly fear crime more than any other group. They respond more to the broader societal changes than to the specific changes in their environments.

Our findings suggest that social diversity factors (either perceptions or preferences) are important in predicting fear and vary depending on the age group affected. That is, environmental factors interact with age in generating levels of fear.

It is the instances where people cannot move voluntarily (such as the case of the inner city elderly) where problems with mix will continue to manifest themselves in ways such as enhanced fear. It is these groups who warrant greater attention in future investigations and in proposing strategies for remediation.

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